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REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP ON HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

Lusaka, Zambia, 1-6 October 1984

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Opening and duration of the meeting

1. The Workshop on Household Surveys was held at the Commonwealth Youth Centre, Lusaka, Zambia, from 1 to 6 October 1984. The meeting was jointly sponsored by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in collaboration with the Government of Zambia. It was opened by the Acting Permanent Secretary for the National Commission for Development Planning.

Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by directors of statistics or surveys from 15 African countries: Botswana, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. The following organizations were represented: CFTC, Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT), ECA, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Statistical Office.

Election of Officers

4. Mr. J.P. Banda (Zambia) was elected Chairman of the meeting, with Mr. L.M. Wasonga (Kenya) as Vice-Chairman and Mr. E.O. Boateng (Ghana) as Rapporteur.

B. AGENDA

5. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

(1) Opening address
(2) Election of officers
(3) Adoption of agenda and other organizational matters
(4) Progress report on the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP)
(5) The quality and reliability of household survey data
(6) Household data applications and analysis
(7) Guidelines in report writing and dissemination of data
(8) Data base development
(9) Kenya National Sample Survey and Evaluation Programme (NASSEP): A case study
(10) Future work programme
(11) Other business
(12) Adoption of report and closing

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening address

6. In his opening address, the Acting Permanent Secretary for the National Commission for Development Planning expressed his great pleasure on behalf of the Party, Government and people of Zambia in welcoming all participants to the Workshop.

7. He emphasised that there was the need for Africa to establish durable capabilities for data collection, processing and analysis that would provide the information required for the formulation of sound national development plans and policies. He indicated that a wide range of new and updated data are required for this purpose and these should be provided in time to avoid the data becoming useful only as part of a historical series.

8. The Acting Permanent Secretary expressed his satisfaction with the fact that 17 African countries were already participating in the National Household Survey Capability Programme and stressed that if the programme was carried out expeditiously, it would help most African countries to build an enduring and effective survey apparatus which would be able to generate a continuous flow of integrated statistics.

9. In stressing the importance of a continuing programme of surveys, the Acting Permanent Secretary indicated that the ad hoc surveys previously carried out by the Department of Census and Statistics of Zambia had not been able to adequately meet the diverse and urgent data needs of the Party and its Government. They had also impeded the establishment of durable statistical infrastructures. It was for that reason that Zambia joined other countries in participating in the NHSCP.

10. In conclusion, the Acting Permanent Secretary thanked all countries and agencies which had contributed positively to the NHSCP.

D. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE AFRICAN HOUSEHOLD SURVEY CAPABILITY PROGRAMME (AHSCP)

11. In introducing the document, 'Progress Report on African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP)' - (E/ECA/SM/13), a representative of the secretariat outlined briefly progress made under the following components of the regional programme: country projects, regional advisory service, training, studies and external aid.

12. He explained that 10 out of 17 African countries participating in the NHSCP are now fully operational. Lesotho was almost but not quite operational. In addition, countries like Nigeria and Mauritius carried out survey programmes which could easily be considered as part of the NHSCP. In the case of Nigeria, a joint mission to that country is being planned but definite dates have yet to be fixed.

13. With respect to the regional advisory service, the representative of the secretariat explained that UNDP which had hitherto funded two posts had indicated that it was terminating its assistance with effect from 31 December 1984. The matter was still being pursued through normal channels and it was hoped that the outcome of these discussions would be known soon to avoid the sort of confusion which in mid-1982 led to the separation of the two experts who were encumbering the UNDP posts.

14. Training had been given high priority by the AHSCP and a number of working groups had been held in 1974, 1979 and 1981 and a seminar in 1981. The view had been expressed that there was need to widen participation at these meetings to include not only the directors of statistics or surveys but also some of the senior professional staff engaged in survey work.

15. Activities in the area of studies undertaken were briefly outlined and participants were invited to propose areas in which further studies could be undertaken for the benefit of the countries participating in the NHSCP.

16. Finally, the representative of the secretariat expressed the need for a new look at the whole question of external assistance. Donor agencies were reluctant to fund local personnel costs or incentive payments but were more likely to consider requests from African countries which had used their own resources to start survey programmes and had then requested assistance in certain key areas for which lack of foreign exchange posed an insurmountable obstacle.

17. In the discussions which followed, participants either updated the information on their countries in Annex II of the background document or provided information which was completely lacking in that document. For example, the Nigerian delegate gave details of their on-going survey programme which covered education, health, employment, agriculture, housing, household expenditure, household income and environment. The delegates of Sierra Leone and Gambia indicated their countries' willingness to participate in the NHSCP as soon as their current activities in connection with population censuses had been completed.

18. One delegate objected to the expression "enrolled in the AHSCP" which had been used in the background document and proposed its replacement by "participating in the AHSCP". With this change, he hoped that countries like Nigeria that were implementing integrated survey programmes could be regarded as participating in the AHSCP.

19. The question of integration was next discussed. It was felt that although the AHSCP had stated as its primary objective the establishment of statistical infrastructures for the collection and analysis of integrated data on households and household members, the necessary pre-requisites of integration such as common infrastructures, more rational data collection, standardized concepts, definitions and classifications and appropriate sample designs had not been given sufficient attention in the discussions on the progress of the AHSCP.

20. With regard to country projects, questions were asked about invitations to ECA for missions to be undertaken, whether advisory services were provided on request to both countries participating in the AHSCP and those that were merely undertaking ad hoc surveys. In responding to these questions, the representative of the secretariat indicated that countries normally initiate requests for missions to be undertaken by ECA or the UN Statistical Office. However, where there had been prior discussions, formal or informal, the UN can seek Government clearance to undertake a specific mission. The representative of the secretariat also indicated that advisory services were provided to all countries on request by ECA irrespective of whether they were participating in the AHSCP or merely undertaking ad hoc surveys.

21. It was also indicated that the practice was for the NHSCP Reporter to include only items on activities in countries participating in the NHSCP. However, the periodic reports on the African Household Survey Capability Programme (RAF/78/016) cover all missions undertaken including those to non-NHSCP countries. In the next issue of the Progress Report on the AHSCP, it would be possible to include also an account of ad hoc surveys in the region provided such information is available to ECA.

22. The need for quantifying requirements in the data processing field was also stressed by most delegates. In response, the representative of the secretariat explained that the data processing specialist to be provided by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1985 would attempt to do this for about six countries and in addition take the necessary actions to meet most of these requirements. It had not been considered necessary or desirable that he should spread his services to more than six countries but it is expected that through the documentation that he will prepare, he will be able to reach more than the six countries listed in the project document.

23. The Workshop endorsed the request already submitted to UNDP by ECA that the regional component of the AHSCP should be continued beyond 31 December 1984. It also expressed its concern about lack of adequate funding for statistics. In this connection, the representative of the secretariat explained that most donors now have indicative planning figures (IPF) for the aid they give to individual countries. Statistical projects have therefore to compete with others for assistance within the country IPF. Thus if the Ministry responsible for aid negotiations did not accord a high priority to statistical projects in the bilateral discussions, there was little likelihood of external assistance for these projects.

24. In this connection, the question of a co-ordination machinery for aid given to a country by several donors was raised. The concern was due in part to the fear that unless aid was properly co-ordinated it could tend to distort a country's priorities. The representative of the secretariat explained some of the attempts made in the past to set up a co-ordinating machinery. In the field of population aid, for example, there is reasonable exchange of information among the donors but this cannot be described as a co-ordinating machinery.

25. What was required to be done should be at the national level. It was suggested that the focal points for receiving external aid should take more adequate steps to co-ordinate external aid requirements.

26. Another topic discussed by the Workshop was training. This related to all levels of training: in-service middle level, undergraduate, graduate and study tours. Examples were given by some delegates of the number of middle level staff required not only for household surveys but also for technical support to all statistical projects. It was indicated that to cope with these numbers special programmes of in-service training had been instituted. The representative of the secretariat explained that in-service training was one of the priority areas to be dealt with by the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) during the current biennium. Missions had been arranged by the Training Adviser for English-speaking countries to Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe to discuss issues involved in that level of training and to propose the type of assistance which ECA can give to each country. A guide syllabus for such training had already been prepared and circulated and the Training Adviser could assist with actual training. The need for special training survey management was also stressed. It was also stressed that for study tours to be successful, they should be well prepared with a programme of activities agreed upon before the start of the tour.

27. Another point mentioned during the discussions was the central place occupied by agriculture in the whole survey programme. It was argued that although agriculture constituted the core component it was not very clear how effective the implementation of the programme had been in emphasising this. Unless the AHSCP responded to the needs of African countries for comprehensive and timely agricultural data, many of these countries may be forced to adopt alternative methods for obtaining the same data. This will not only result in costly duplication in data collection effort but also confusion may arise with some data being collected by more than one agency. The AHSCP needs to provide a food supplies information system which would cover not only crop area estimates but also various ways of making subjective and objective crop yield estimates. Such estimates should be within tolerable limits of error and be made available within a time-lag to be of current relevance and not a historic record. A third point which was made in this connection was that information on the marketing of agricultural products should be made available to the public. Finally the question of storage including location and size of stocks was mentioned as a necessary requirement of the information system. The meeting noted that countries in the region could usefully benefit from the study of the experiences of countries which have established food supply information systems.

28. In response to the above, the representative of the secretariat indicated that while it was generally accepted that agricultural surveys should form the core of the AHSCP, seven out of the seventeen African countries for which project proposals had been formulated had not included agricultural surveys in their survey programmes. The main reason for this omission is that in almost all these countries the Central Statistical Office is not responsible for agricultural surveys and the Ministry so responsible, the Ministry of Agriculture, had not considered it expedient to collaborate with the Central Statistical Office in undertaking agricultural surveys under the NHSCP. The question of delivery of information on food supplies was one, however, which should be given priority attention by all countries participating in the NHSCP.

29. The Co-ordinator of the NHSCP finally outlined technical studies which had been completed or in course of preparation or planned to be undertaken in the near future. The studies completed are: "Survey Data Processing", "Non-Sampling errors", "The Role of the NHSCP in providing Health Information in Developing Countries", "Handbook of Household Surveys - Revised edition", "Development and Design of Survey Questionnaire"; "Household Surveys for labour force and manpower statistics" by ILO, "Use of Household Surveys for collecting food and agricultural studies" by FAO and "Use of Household Surveys for collecting statistics on women". Planned studies include "Design and use of Master Samples" by the UN Statistical Office. "Household income, consumption and expenditure surveys" by the UN Statistical Office, ILO and the World Bank and "Use of micro-computers in processing household survey data".

30. It was also indicated by the representative of the secretariat that ECA intended to develop a package of studies which will, among others, serve as training material.

E. QUALITY AND RELIABILITY OF HOUSEHOLD SURVEY DATA

31. The document "Quality and Reliability of Household Survey Data - Suggested Guidelines for Quality Reporting" (E/ECA/SM/14) was introduced by a representative of the secretariat.

32. In his statement, he indicated that the success or failure of any survey depended ultimately on the quality of data collected and, therefore, it was important that every effort should be made to ensure the highest quality possible.

33. Next a brief description was given of the factors which determine the quality of statistics received from a household survey and it was indicated that the paper was confined only to some of the errors which affect the accuracy of the results.

34. The representative of the secretariat then gave a brief outline of the sampling, coverage, non-response and response errors (sources, effects on the results and adjustment techniques). In reviewing these errors, the main purpose was not to describe them in detail but to provide the conceptual framework for the Annex in which some guidelines on quality reporting were presented. References were made to a selected bibliography where these topics had been dealt with in depth.

35. Speaking about the evaluation of the quality of the data, the representative of the secretariat stressed the point that the ECA Statistics Division was strongly recommending to the countries of the region that they should always incorporate an evaluation programme into their household survey designs. In this connection, it was pointed out, the suggested guidelines should be considered as a first step in this direction.

36. In introducing the guidelines, the representative of the secretariat, explained that in the process of developing them, the ECA Statistics Division had followed a modest approach taking into consideration:

a. The existing national practices for collecting information;

b. The constraints imposed by the limited personnel and other resources available to national statistical offices;

c. The need at the start, to limit the scope to a few well defined objectives which could be readily assimilated by the national statistical offices and which would facilitate the eventual expansion of the programme.

37. On the basis of the above considerations, it was suggested to limit initially the presentation of information on data quality to selected components of the accuracy of the survey data, namely, under-coverage, sampling error, and total or item non-response. It was thought wise that response error evaluation should be tackled at a much later stage.

38. It was stressed that the suggested guidelines had two major objectives:

a. to provide the users with some information about the survey errors for assessing the reliability of the data; and

b. to furnish the relevant staff of the national statistical offices with information on the kind and size of error arising in their household surveys, for the use in monitoring the quality and providing thus the basis for both the improvement of the methods used and of the design of future surveys.

39. In conclusion the fact was stressed that the household surveys constituted a powerful tool for national policy formulation and it was hoped that the introduction of an evaluation programme would further sharpen this tool.

40. In the discussions which followed, the main focus was the guidelines for quality reporting. Almost all the participants recognised that a chapter on the quality of data should always be included in the main report together with the main findings of the survey. However, several points of view were expressed, and a number of questions were asked concerning the following points:

a. Scope of quality reporting: The view was expressed that for a proper evaluation of the quality of the data the scope of quality reporting should be broadened to include such aspects as comparability of data and ways of presenting the results etc. On this point it was stressed by the secretariat that a limited scope of quality reporting at this particular stage of development of the African component of the NHSCP was advisable.

b. Coverage errors: Many participants described the difficulties they had been having and the efforts they had been making in reducing the coverage error. Another raised the question whether any particular post-enumeration technique would be applicable to the African region in general. In response to the questions raised on this topic the secretariat pointed out that post-enumeration surveys for assessing the under-coverage errors are costly and time consuming. It would be enough if the countries concerned would give a statement concerning any detected coverage error which might have a distorting effect on the survey results. They should indicate the source (incomplete frames, listing errors, etc.), and its magnitude if known. If feasible, its effect on the result should also be given.

c. Sampling error: Almost all the delegates stated that their main problems in calculating the sampling error were either the lack of qualified personnel to undertake the job or the non-availability of the proper software packages and they asked the guidance and assistance of the secretariat in this respect. In response to these calls for assistance, the Co-ordinator of the NHSCP offered to send to the countries concerned, on request, an appropriate software package (CLUSTERS).

d. Other: One delegate expressed the view that non-responses often occur at other levels before the ultimate stage. Therefore, non-response at such levels should be documented. Although some delegates felt that non-response at such levels were classified under coverage error, the issue of documentation was generally accepted. It was also pointed out that in applying the population adjustment technique both coverage and non-response errors are treated in the same way.

41. Finally, it was stressed that proper management of the survey and careful and thorough planning in organizing the field operation coupled with vigorous implementation of the plan would do much to achieve high quality of data.

F. HOUSEHOLD SURVEY DATA APPLICATIONS AND ANALYSIS

42. The background document on "Household Survey Data Applications and Analysis" (E/ECA/SM/15) was introduced by a representative of the secretariat. He recalled that both producers and users of household survey data had recognized that the absence of a comprehensive document on household survey data applications and analysis was one of the main reasons for the low demand for such data in a number of African countries. The ECA Conference of Ministers had examined the issue and had at its session in April 1983 passed resolution 469 (XVIII) which inter alia recommended to the United Nations and its specialized agencies that they should "extend international statistical recommendations to include guidelines on data analysis and applications".

43. It had earlier been decided to use the unspent funds from the 1981 Seminar on Household Surveys sponsored by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, to engage a consultant to prepare a document on household data applications and analysis which could be used as a guide to the analysis of household survey data and also for the training of statisticians. Prof. Irma Adelman of the University of California at Berkeley had been identified in 1983 and had prepared a preliminary outline of her study. This outline covered current and potential uses of household survey data, including project evaluation, sectoral policy analysis and economy-wide planning. She had then proposed to show how the Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) could be expanded into a computable general equilibrium (CGE) model by "embedding into the SAM accounting framework behavioural relationships derived from economic modelling of the behaviour of institutional factors based on household surveys".

44. The consultant had visited three African countries before preparing her report which had concentrated on household budget surveys.

45. The representative of the secretariat then discussed briefly the different sections of the report covering the use of household budget surveys for rural development policy (policies for the rural sector, empirical models of the subsistence sector, policy questions which can be addressed by means of the farm household model), the use of the urban household budget data for development policy (the urban household model, econometric estimation, policy uses of urban household budget surveys) and the use of household budget surveys in system-wide planning (the Social Accounting Matrix (SAM), policy uses of SAM, the computable general equilibrium model (CGE), policy uses of CGE models).

46. Following this presentation, Mr. L.M. Wasonga of Kenya introduced the conference room document entitled: "Application of Household Survey Data to Monitoring Nutrition Status - Kenya". He explained that the paper discussed how household survey data from the Kenya Central Bureau of Statistics are used for monitoring nutritional status of the population. He attempted to show that the malnutritional problems are just a symptom of the imbalance in a large system of inter-relationship between various factors. Most nutritional surveys concentrate on the symptoms without giving consideration to the causes of these problems.

47. Mr. Wasonga further explained that the nutritional status of the population is affected by many factors. There is a functional relationship between nutrition and access to resources such as productive land, water supply, market and social amenities, food production and supply, such as farming inputs, labour, prices, storage, acreage planted and food losses; socio-economic factors involving occupation, demographic and cultural factors; environmental factors including location, ecological zones and administrative areas; and health status such as parasitic infection, morbidity, sanitation and water quality. All these factors have positive or negative influence on the nutritional status of the population. Linkage and analysis of these data using household survey data sources can make it possible to identify suitable indicators for monitoring nutritional impact of the district level development projects.

48. The inclusion of the nutrition modules in household surveys can provide a useful source of data for nutritional surveillance in a more cost effective way.

49. In the discussions which followed, participants raised issues such as the audience to which Prof. I. Adelman's paper was addressed, whether there should not have been joint authorship of such a paper (an econometrician and a statistician rather than an econometrician alone) and whether more African countries should not have been visited by her before making some of the assumptions inherent in her report. In particular her assumption that "urban households differ from rural households in that they buy all their consumption goods and services on the market and sell all their labor" was questioned. It was pointed out that in Africa the distinction between "urban" and "rural" was generally based on size of locality.

50. In reply to these questions, the representative of the secretariat indicated that the paper was addressed to users of household survey data (including planners), survey statisticians and statisticians under training at the statistical training centres in Africa. It was important for all three categories to be aware of the policy uses of household survey data since these were very relevant to their work. With respect to the authorship of the paper, it was considered that taking into account the limited funds available for the study only one expert could be engaged and a user/development economist was preferred to a statistician. For the same financial constraints, no more countries could be visited by the consultant before preparing her study.

51. Participants also commented on the style used in the report which made it difficult for non-specialists to understand clearly certain parts of the report. A more popular style like the one used in the Handbook of Household Syrveys (Revised Edition) would have been appropriate. If the present style is retained, then there is the need for a glossary of terms used which would aid the non-specialist in understanding the recommendations being made.

52. It was also considered by many participants that the models suggested in the paper should be experimented with over a long period before any recommendation as to their applicability to African household survey data could be made.

53. It was stressed that the data requirements for the models should have been more explicitly stated and that section II.2.4. on "Data Requirements" in the consultant's paper was misleading. In reply to this criticism, the representative of the secretariat explained that section II.2.4. referred to Strauss' (1984) study. However, the consultant had access to the ECA document on "Data Requirements" (E/CN.14/SM/22) which was presented to the 1979 Working Group on the Organization, Content and Methodology of Household Surveys and this may have been the reason why no direct mention of data requirements was made in her paper.

54. One of the participants recalled that there was experience in the region in the construction of models. For example, Botswana had constructed three SAM models, the last one in 1982. It was important to examine data uses through these models since they helped to check the consistency of economic data from different sources. These models were however, deficient in demographic and social statistics. What was required was a suitable model to bring together economic, demographic and social statistics. In this connection, the African experience in the use of the system of Social and Demographic Statistics (SSDS) would be relevant. The representative of the secretariat explained that SSDS was never formally implemented in the African region since the countries opted for a simpler framework.

55. Another aspect of the paper which was discussed at some length was whether it had not focussed too narrowly on the policy uses of data. Issues such as policy formulation, project formulation, monitoring and evaluation were hardly touched upon in the paper. There was also the question of whether a high priority should be given to these econometric models and accounting matrices at this time.

56. However, there appeared to have been a consensus that the three countries (Cameroon, Ethiopia and Kenya) which had generated a lot of data from their household survey programmes should be encouraged to undertake this type of analysis and further work should be done in using the suggested framework for policy formulation in these countries. National capacities for modelling and for constructing agro-ecological zones should be developed. Until this is done, it would not be advisable for some countries to attempt to construct such sophisticated models.

57. In conclusion, it was suggested that the consultant should revise the paper in the light of some of the comments made above. ECA, in collaboration with other agencies if necessary should attempt to document country experiences in the policy uses of all types of household survey data (and not merely data from household budget surveys). This information together with the consultant's revised draft could be developed later into a single document which would meet the original objectives of the assignment.

58. In the discussions on the Kenya paper, one of the participants wondered if household survey data could be effectively used for monitoring project level impact. The Workshop was informed that the use of household survey data to monitor project level impact would require additional project specific surveys to be undertaken. This has been attempted in Kenya in the case of the evaluation of the rural access roads programme.

59. On the shift from the production of food crops to cash crop, the Workshop was informed that there is a need to advise the farmers not to devote all their productive land to cash crops. A portion should be reserved for growing food to ensure food security at the household level.

60. The need for use of health statistics to complement household survey data in monitoring the nutrition situation was stressed. On the functional relationship between the factors affecting nutrition, one of the participants expressed the need for more detailed information on the functional equation to be made available to other users. The representative of Kenya indicated that steps in this direction will be taken.

61. It was also proposed that the Kenya paper be elaborated upon to indicate how the various indicators are used for policy formulation, project formulation and evaluation and for decision making.

62. Under the same agenda item the Workshop considered the document E/ECA/SM/19 entitled "Measuring the Progress of Primary Health Care - Health Survey Experience of Africa". The document drew attention to the significant role of household surveys in providing essential health information and in meeting especially the data required by countries for monitoring and evaluation of the programmes of Primary Health Care and Health for All by the year 2000 sponsored by the World Health Organization and the UNICEF's new world-wide programme of Child Survival and Development Revolution. These programmes as well as other development activities in the field of health and nutrition provided the impetus to the countries to plan systematic collection of health information and develop the statistical infrastructure needed for the purpose.

63. The document noted that among all sources of health information, household surveys were probably the only practical ways through which data could be obtained on a number of health, demographic and social indicators. A continuing programme of household surveys such as the NHSCP could generate a regular series of statistical indicators required for monitoring and evaluation of public health programmes.

64. Household survey programmes could be used to obtain information on the health and nutritional status of the population as a whole and of special target groups such as mothers and children; to estimate levels and differentials in morbidity and mortality; to assess health knowledge and practices; and to measure the coverage and use of health services. Being based on a sample of the whole population including households not covered by the health care system, they provided information which would enable the computation of rates and estimates of the number of persons at risk. Survey programmes could be designed so as to provide not only national estimates but also estimates for regions and target groups of interest (disabled, children, women, etc.). The document identified a set of 23 major health related indicators which were suitable for collection of information through household surveys. These fell under three broad categories:

a. indicators of the provision and coverage of health care,

b. indicators of health status; and

c. economic and social indicators related to health.

65. The document noted that five African countries (Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco and Nigeria) had started carrying out health related surveys as part of their household survey programmes. These were organized either in the form of exclusive health survey rounds or as an additional module to another on-going survey. There were significant differences between countries in the scope and coverage of the surveys. Nevertheless the experiences of the countries would provide useful guidance for further development of health survey programmes in the region.

66. The Workshop expressed satisfaction at the progress made by several African countries in the organization of health surveys and emphasized their relevance as an essential source of information on health related indicators. There was unanimous agreement that health surveys should form an integral part of national household survey programmes and that they should be repeated at periodic intervals to provide a regular series of indicators. While carrying out health surveys, it was essential that the statistical offices establish close links with principal users especially the government departments and other agencies concerned with public health, in order to secure their full participation at all stages of survey-taking, data analysis and report preparation.

67. The Workshop considered some of the problems of data collection on health topics, such as disability, morbidity and mortality, using lay interviewers. It was informed that some countries had preferred to employ para-medical personnel as interviewers in such surveys. The Workshop stressed that wherever lay interviewers were used they should be given thorough training in the techniques of field operations and their work closely supervised as far as possible by public health and medical personnel, in order to ensure higher quality of primary data.

68. The Workshop was informed that in one country of the region, the household health survey was accompanied by an epidemiological survey based on a sub-sample of the health survey, in which a comprehensive health examination was carried out of all the members of the households by a team of medical experts. This survey obtained in-depth data on the health and nutritional status of the sample households and it thus complemented the information of the general health survey. The Workshop suggested that other countries should also consider undertaking joint health and epidemiological surveys for more detailed information on the health status of the population.

69. Several participants mentioned the problems encountered by statistical offices in the analysis and interpretation of health survey data and in the preparation of the survey reports. It was stated that assistance that could be given by the user agencies in these areas did not prove adequate. The Workshop recommended that international agencies should provide the necessary support to the statistical offices in data analysis and report writing until the statistical offices were able to acquire the necessary capability.

70. The Workshop was also informed of the proposed plan by one country to organize a national seminar of users and producers of health statistics to discuss the findings of the health survey just completed. The Workshop welcomed this initiative and strongly recommended that other countries also should organize such seminars with adequate documentation of experiences. It requested interested international agencies to support the programme of national seminars and encourage interchange of national experiences which would greatly contribute to further improvement of survey tools for measurement of health.

G. GUIDELINES ON REPORT WRITING AND DISSEMINATION OF DATA

71. Two background papers, "Report Writing and Dissemination of Data" (E/ECA/SM/16) and "Guidelines for the Preparation of Survey Reports and Dissemination of Data" (E/ECA/SM/17) were presented by representatives of the secretariat. Both papers indicated the necessity for publication of more than one type of report on a household survey.

72. It was pointed out that in the first stage of reporting the most important reports are the following:

- "Main Survey Report" (in document E/ECA/SM/16) or "Report on Basic Data and Survey Methodology (as stated in document E/ECA/SM/17).

- "Executive Summary Report" (E/ECA/SM/17) or "Summary Household Survey Findings" (E/ECA/SM/16).

Although the suggested titles in the two papers are slightly different, the proposed contents are roughly the same.

73. The main survey report should contain a concise but comprehensible information about the survey design and presentation of basic survey data in the form of tables, diagrams or graphs accompanied by explanatory notes. A technical Appendix attached to this report is recommended. However, it was stressed that tables with very detailed disaggregation or detailed cross tabulations for particular domains of study, should, if considered desirable, be normally included in specialised reports.

74. The Executive Summary is aimed at acquainting governmental agencies, research centres, the general public and other users with the most relevant findings and conclusions resulting from the survey. The material of the Report ought to be carefully selected, the results set out in the context of the survey programme and policy implications and the relevant findings in problem areas clearly stated. The number of tables should be very limited and some findings may be presented in the form of charts and diagrams.

75. In continuation of the introductory remarks, it was proposed that a PRELIMINARY SURVEY REPORT should be considered as an addition to the reports generally prepared by statistical offices. This report should contain mostly a set of statistical tables issued immediately after the survey data tabulation. The preparation of such a report is necessary in cases where there have been undue delays in data processing and where there is considerable pressure from the users for the urgent release of data.

76. It was also suggested that a separate "Administrative Report" may also be necessary. This report ought to contain detailed description of the survey methodology and organization including copies of all questionnaires used and instructions. This report would be extremely useful for future survey designs.

77. The preparation of specialized reports was also proposed. These reports dealing with specific subjects should contain detailed tables, graphs and diagrams and details of models used to facilitate the analysis.

78. Finally one of the representatives of the secretariat indicated the important role of national statistical offices in survey data dissemination. It was proposed that central statistical offices should organise seminars for the most important data users in the country with the aim of acquainting them with highlights of the research findings.

79. In the discussions which followed, it was proposed that a country report sent to the UNSO or the ECA should be carefully studied and a feedback on the presentation of the report should be sent to the national statistical office as a guide to the improvement of future reports.

80. It was stressed that the main survey report should be detailed enough to satisfy the majority of users. It was also suggested that the methodological section in this report should be abridged and put in the Annex.

81. Delayed report delivery is caused partly by bottle-necks in the survey data processing and partly by lack of qualified personnel to assist in report writing. Adequate steps should be taken to ensure that these problems in data processing are eliminated. In addition, training given to staff of the survey section of national statistical offices should also make provision for the training of those who will be writing the reports.

82. It was emphasised that the Executive Summary should play an important role in the dissemination of survey data. Due to the fact that countries participating in the NHSCP are organizing many different surveys a national capability for data reporting and data dissemination should be built up. In the meantime, it was observed that countries when necessary should be encouraged to seek assistance-- preferably from within the country and failing that, from outside to undertake expeditious preparation of executive summary reports.

83. The Workshop next turned its attention to the question of the dissemination of computer data tapes which are now being produced as a result of the household surveys being undertaken as part of the NHSCP. It was clear that no single policy existed in the region. In some countries, the head of the central statistical office has the legal right to decide what, when and to whom to supply computer tapes. At the other extreme, it was government's policy not to release any raw data whether in the form of computer tapes or otherwise to any user. In between the two extremes, policies on computer data tape dissemination were either in the course of being formulated or had not yet been given any attention.

84. The majority of participants agreed that there should be a distinction between in and outside country agencies as far as disseminating household survey data tapes is concerned. For the former, provided certain safeguards are mutually agreed upon, tapes should be freely released. For the outside agencies, it might be more appropriate to request them to specify their demand for additional tabulation so that the national statistical office can see whether these can be provided for them.

85. It was the concensus of the meeting, however, that this topic deserved further study.

86. The Workshop next considered the dissemination of data through the use of national seminars and the mass media. It was agreed that national statistical offices should organize national seminars to discuss the main findings of household surveys and identify primary areas for further data collection. The main results of the study should be published through press releases and articles prepared for the mass media.

H. DATA BASE DEVELOPMENT

87. In presenting the document, "Towards a Household Survey Data Base" (E/ECA/SM/18), Mr. Olsson, a SIDA expert attached to Zimbabwe Central Statistical Office, highlighted some of the aspects of the subject which the paper covered:

- The difference between data base oriented design of survey processing and traditionally oriented processing. In the data base oriented design the emphasis is on readiness to produce required information rather than to produce a certain report. This does not necessarily require utilization of advanced software and hardware technology.

- In the National Household Survey Programme integration - the combined use of resources is emphasised in many different ways. One important aspect of that is the combined use of the information itself. The value of the combined information from different surveys is greater than the sum of the value of the information from each individual survey. In order to facilitate the combined use a data base oriented approach to the processing is required.

- Several problems have to be solved in order to arrive at a data base oriented design:

  a. The concepts used in the different surveys have to be standardized. Unique identifications have to be utilized for the basic units.

  b. When several surveys are combined the data structures grow in complexity. Either the data base organization has to include data processing experts, or the structures have to be simplified by e.g., aggregating all information to household level.

c. Due to constraints of survey design and household mobility, integration at the household level may only be possible for surveys conducted during a short time period. Respondent fatigue also puts a limit to the possibilities to collect information from the same set of households. Therefore integration will have to be done on the level of a geographically delimited unit, larger than the household, for example, the cluster or district.

88. Though several problems exist - most of them not of a technical character but rather of logical, administrative and managerial character - the potential of a data base oriented processing of household survey data is encouraging and should motivate experiments to find out suitable designs.

89. During the discussion which followed Mr. Olsson's presentation, several problems were touched upon by the participants:

- Data from household surveys have to be combined with data from other sources particularly from the modern sector - to be of use in national planning. The household data base has to be part of a larger statistical data base.

- The technical level of ambition in the design has to be adapted to what is feasible in a certain environment. The "normal" processing to produce the desired reports has to be given priority.

- The conceptual framework for the surveys combined has to be decided upon before the surveys are launched if any successful data base design is to be accomplished.

- By the use of micro-computers in survey data processing some of the problems encountered presently might be reduced.

- It might take considerable time to train the users of a data base and orient them to the new situation where they should turn to the statistical office and require certain information not available in the published reports.

- Different experiences were expressed concerning the possibility to link information at the household level. Some delegates expressed doubts as to whether such linkage would be possible.

- The Workshop noted that the establishment of Data Base Systems would require the hardware, software and the necessary manpower which is lacking at the moment in most countries of the region. It was therefore suggested that countries should give more priority to the building up of the computing capability needed for generating tables in the short run.

I. KENYA NASSEP - A CASE STUDY

90. For this agenda item document No. E/ECA/SM/20 was introduced by the Kenyan delegation and supplemented with other information as necessary. The National Sample Survey and Evaluation programme, 1980-1984 is the second phase of Kenya's Household Survey Capability Programme which was started in 1975 with the inception of the National Integrated Sample Survey Programme (NISSP), 1975-1979. The experience gained in running NISSP surveys was used in improving the survey design as well as the survey programme during NASSEP. The new programme was designed to provide integrated data on a wide range of subjects including crop forecasts, education and literacy, health, nutrition and other socio-economic and demographic indicators.

91. Whereas the NISSP Programme was designed to provide reliable statistical data at the level of the province, NASSEP was required to provide reliable data at the district level for planning purposes. As a result the sample size was greatly increased and the district made the domain of study. In total a master sample of 648 rural clusters and 150 urban clusters with an average of 100 households per cluster were selected. From the master sample of households, sub-sampling for individual core, and modular surveys was effected as desired.

92. In order to facilitate sample identification and control, use was made of existing cartographic capability within the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). This together with the strengthening of the department's Field Survey Unit ensured a fairly good implementation of the total survey design. However, the use of the 1979 Census Enumeration area maps presented some problems in a few areas where the E.A. population counts did not correspond with the results obtained from the quick counts carried out in selected enumeration areas. The E.A. sizes also tended to vary greatly with the result that it was necessary to split big E.A.'s or combine smaller E.A.'s in order to control cluster size.

93. The survey programme planned for NASSEP comprised continuous crop forecast surveys carried out twice each year, cyclical year-round core surveys and single-round modular surveys. The core surveys planned were as follows:

- Urban and Rural Household Budget Survey
  (April 1981 - March 1982)

- Agricultural Production Survey
  (April 1983 - March 1984)

- Urban and Rural Employment Survey
  (April 1984 - March 1985)

Due to cuts in Government spending in 1983 both the Agricultural Production Survey and the Employment Survey were not launched but in their place other surveys which had not been planned were carried out namely: a manpower survey 1982, a survey on housing in 1983 and the contraceptive prevalence survey in 1984. With regard to modules the following surveys were carried out:

- Rural Literacy Survey - 1980
- Rural Survey of the Handicapped - 1981
- Nutrition Survey - 1982/83
- National Demographic Survey - 1983
- Social Indicators Survey - 1982

In addition to these surveys, urban and rural market prices surveys were continued. In the area of evaluation, work continued on the rural access roads project in Nyanza and Western Provinces.

94. The delegates from Kenya gave details of the planning and execution of the Household Budget Survey (1981/1982) and highlighted the problems encountered. Reference was made to the size of the questionnaire and the contribution made by users in both design and content as well as the major highlights of the overall survey planning and data collection. With regard to field operations, emphasis was given to training of field staff and follow-ups in the field during actual enumeration. The experience in this area is that supervision should not be left wholly to the field supervisory staff. In Kenya, use was made of professional officers and subject matter specialists particularly immediately after launching the survey. Details were also given on flow of completed questionnaires from field offices to headquarters, editing and verification at the various stages and data preparation and organization at the headquarters. The data processing constraints and problems were discussed at length and information was given concerning the current work situation with regard to data analysis and preparation for report writing.

95. During discussions, the participants expressed interest in learning the experience of the Central Bureau of Statistics with regard to the following:

a. The determination of sample size at the district level

b. Experience in continuous use of the same households for several surveys within a 5 year period

c. Individual surveys in the programme

d. Experience in linking data from different surveys done on common ultimate sampling units

e. Report writing and publications

f. Costs

96. In their response, the Kenyan delegation gave details on the above topics. However, it was emphasised that whereas most of the problems are common to many countries in the AHSCP, some problems are country specific and their solutions will have to take this dimension into account. This is particularly so with regard to the use of a permanent cadre of field staff and Government budgetary practices. With regard to technical issues related to survey design, the Kenya experience is that it is very crucial to have flexible and cost-effective designs aimed at collecting a wide range of socio-economic data. In planning individual surveys the needs of users should be taken into account through regular dialogue with the main users of the survey data.

97. With respect to the determination of sample size, the Kenya delegation explained that a minimum of 20 clusters had been determined for each district, based on sampling variability. However, 4 additional clusters had been added to ensure that even if a few clusters were excluded from the actual survey for a variety of reasons, the minimum number could still be maintained. More research on this was required.

98. With regard to matching of data from different surveys, it was indicated that CBS had undertaken some work particularly with regard to linking data from the Kenya fertility survey 1977/78 with the Nutrition survey, 1977. It was pointed out that it is intended to link data from the Household Budget Survey 1981/82 with data from Nutrition Survey III 1982. In order to be able to link data, it is necessary that the surveys be conducted in the same ultimate sampling units within the same reporting period. This in turn necessitates the retention of the same sample household over a period of time. Doubts were expressed as to the efficiency of doing this due to attrition of sample respondents. It was, however, pointed out that with regard to rural surveys done by the Kenya CBS, experience is that the attrition rate is normally small. It was agreed that this is an area for which more research is needed and experiences of more countries in the region is needed.

99. In connection with cost of surveys, the feeling among delegates was that there is a tendency to have over-ambitious survey programmes which sometimes fail to be accomplished due to lack of financial resources. In the case of NASSEP it was pointed out that this happened in 1983/84 financial year with the consequence that the proposed Agricultural and Employment Surveys were shelved. However, barring Government budgetary restrictions, it has always been the practice in Kenya to cost each individual survey operation.

100. Overall the delegates expressed their gratitude to the CBS for accepting to share their experience in household survey capability programme with countries represented in the Workshop. They were particularly grateful that the Director of the CBS had invited a joint mission made up of the UNSO, ECA and CFTC to evaluate the NASSEP Programme. The report of the evaluation mission formed the basis for the Kenya NASSEP case study. Other countries were encouraged to follow the Kenya example.

J. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

101. The Workshop next considered the proposed work programme for the regional component of the AHSCP contained in the document: African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP) - Programme of Work (1984-1989) - (E/ECA/SM/21).

102. It was noted that the study of country practices of use of master samples, prolonged use of the same ultimate sampling units and rotation samples should be undertaken by ECA in collaboration with Kenya, Nigeria, etc. It was also proposed that a workshop on survey management should be included in the work programme. The Kenya paper on "Application of Household Survey Data to monitoring nutrition status" should be revised and made available through ECA for distribution to all countries participating in the AHSCP.

103. Although some attention had been given to the problems of data processing in the work programme, this was not enough. ECA and the Central Co-ordinating Unit (CCU) should explore means of intensifying its activities in this area. In response to this suggestion, the Co-ordinator of the NHSCP indicated that the CCU was contemplating undertaking a detailed study on the technical problems of data processing as a sequel to its more general study on the same subject which has already been published. In response to another question relating to quality control, the Co-ordinator of the CCU explained that that topic had been adequately covered in the UN Statistical Office publication on Non-Sampling Errors.

104. A plea was also made for copies of relevant NHSCP documents to be sent to Survey Directors in addition to copies which are normally sent to Directors of Statistics.

105. The Co-ordinator of the NHSCP then gave a brief summary of the activities of the CCU planned for the period under review. It was intended to organize at least one visit to each of the countries participating in the NHSCP every year. Such missions will inter alia undertake technical review of projects. One national seminar per year was also planned but funds for this have not yet been secured. There was the need for the exchange of experiences among countries, such record of experiences could be published in the NHSCP Reporter.

106. A proposal was also made for ECA to organize a training course for statisticians in the use of micro-computers.

107. Finally, the Workshop recommended the following work programme for adoption by the fourth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers.

a. Advisory services to member States, on request, in the following areas:

   i. Preparation of survey programme documents for countries requiring technical and financial assistance in the context of the global National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) (two additional countries per year 1984-1989);

   ii. Establishment of active survey operations (two per year 1984-1989),

   iii. Training and development of staff resources needed in establishing effective survey programmes (four per year 1984-1989);

   iv. Technical review of household survey activities (six per year 1984-1989).

b. Development of methodology for the collection, processing, analysis and utilization of integrated demographic, social and economic data already begun will be continued, taking into account technical studies being undertaken by the UN Statistical Office and the UN specialized agencies. Specifically the following will be done:

   i. Preparation of guidelines for the measurement of employment, under-employment and unemployment after the current testing of technical plans for labour force surveys in a number of African countries including Botswana and Malawi is completed;

ii. Further development of technical plans for income, consumption and expenditure surveys, taking into account the special conditions of Africa and the need to make such surveys cost effective;

iii. Examination of technical problems associated with agricultural surveys;

iv. Further development of guidelines on report writing and dissemination of data after critical examination of reports produced under the AHSCP;

v. Examination of sampling problems relating to construction of sampling frames and master samples for integrated surveys and preparation of relevant guidelines;

vi. Continued development of illustrative questionnaires, adaptation of concepts, definitions and classifications and preparation of relevant illustrative tabulation programmes;

vii. Preparation of further guidelines on household data applications and analysis;

viii. Preparation of guidelines on data processing procedures for the support of survey programmes, including the formulation of appropriate guidelines for data base activities.

c. In collaboration with the Central Co-ordinating Unit (CCU) of the UN Statistical Office and the UN specialized agencies, the regional team will assist in the mobilization of technical and financial resources for the implementation of national programmes.

d. Training workshops/seminars on organization, content and methodology of household surveys (1987, 1989).

e. Training of survey personnel of all levels in collaboration with the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA). This will involve the organization of training workshops at STPA and other centres and will be done in collaboration with the UN Statistical Office, the UN specialized agencies, the associate centres of STPA and multilateral as well as bilateral donors. The training activities will cover inclusion of survey techniques in training at under-graduate and similar levels; in-service training at national level and assistance in the organization of exchange visits.

K. OTHER BUSINESS

108. Three issues were discussed under this agenda item: delays in publishing household survey reports, mobilisation of funds for the support of country projects and the contribution of CFTC to the success of the workshop.

109. It was stressed that the implications of the delays in publishing household survey reports should be made known to all concerned so that all co-operating agencies can take necessary steps to solve the problem.

110. The discussion on the mobilisation of resources for the NHSCP focussed mainly on the revival of the issue of a central fund for all activities under the NHSCP and the need of central statistical offices to be aware of procedures and time-tables for requesting assistance from country programmes of the various multilateral and bilateral donor agencies. The co-ordinator of the CCU explained that the question of the central fund had been discussed several times in the past but the donors had not been in favour of such an approach. It was therefore suggested that national statistical offices should try to work more effectively in the existing framework by establishing meaningful contacts with donor agencies, familiarising themselves with the modalities of country programmes and bearing in mind that bilateral agencies want to keep funds disbursed by them under their own control.

111. The Workshop also expressed its gratitude to the Fellowship and Training Programme of the CFTC for making it possible for the workshop to take place by financing the participation of directors of statistics or surveys from Commonwealth African countries.

L. ADOPTION OF REPORT AND CLOSING

112. The Workshop was closed by the Chairman after it had adopted its report, as amended during its discussions, for transmission to the fourth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers.